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Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

Report of the Secretary-General**

1. The present report is submitted in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 55/130 of 8 December 2000, paragraph 8 of which reads as follows:

> "*The General Assembly*,
>
> "...
>
> "8. *Requests* the Secretary-General:
>
> "(a) To provide the Special Committee with all necessary facilities, including those required for its visits to the occupied territories, so that it may investigate the Israeli policies and practices referred to in the present resolution;
>
> "(b) To continue to make available such additional staff as may be necessary to assist the Special Committee in the performance of its tasks;
>
> "(c) To circulate regularly to Member States the periodic reports mentioned in paragraph 6 above;
>
> "(d) To ensure the widest circulation of the reports of the Special Committee and of information regarding its activities and findings, by all means available, through the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat and, where necessary, to reprint those reports of the Special Committee that are no longer available;

* A/56/150.

** The footnote requested by the General Assembly in resolution 54/248 was not included in the submission.

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"(e) To report to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session on the tasks entrusted to him in the present resolution".

2. All necessary facilities were provided to the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories. Arrangements were made for the Special Committee to meet in March and October 2000. Furthermore, the Special Committee carried out a field mission to Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic from 18 to 31 May 2000. Two periodic reports (A/55/373 and Add.1) and the thirty-second report of the Special Committee (A/55/453) have been circulated to Member States.

3. Pursuant to paragraph 8 (d) of resolution 55/130, the Department of Public Information undertook the following activities:

(a) The Department of Public Information continued to provide press coverage of the meetings of the Special Committee. Extensive press and audio-visual coverage was also provided for the meetings of the Commission on Human Rights. The methods used by the Department to provide that coverage included production of press releases, publications, television news packages and radio programmes and organization of press briefings and briefings for the public;

(b) The Department continued to disseminate United Nations information materials, documents and press releases on the activities of the Special Committee and the Commission on Human Rights through the global network of United Nations information centres and services in 67 countries, the 357 depository libraries in 142 countries and the Internet. The Department also continued to make information materials available to non-governmental organizations through its resource centres in New York, Geneva and Vienna;

(c) The Department, through its information centres, provided support to the Special Committee's field mission to Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic in May 2000.

4. By a letter dated 25 June 2001, the Interim Head of the Department of Public Information informed the Chairman of the Special Committee that the findings of the report of the Special Committee would be incorporated into a revised and updated version of the Department's publication, *United Nations and the question of Palestine* (DPI/1481). The publication, which includes a chapter on human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and quotes extensively from the report, will be available for distribution in September/October 2001.

5. In the same letter, the Department informed the Chairman of the Special Committee that copies of its report had also been included in the official information kit prepared for participants at the International Media Encounter on the Question of Palestine, organized by the Department in Paris on 18 and 19 June 2001. Furthermore, the report of the Special Committee and its findings had been highlighted in presentations made by the Department at a conference held at St. John's University, Minnesota, United States of America, on 20 and 21 May 2001, and at a briefing at United Nations Headquarters for students of the University of Groeningen, Netherlands, on 8 June 2001. An electronic version of the report was also distributed by the Public Inquiries Unit of the Department in response to requests received from the public and from educational institutions.

6. It should be also noted that, on 31 May 2001, the Secretary-General addressed a note verbale to all States drawing attention to resolutions 55/130, 55/131, 55/132, 55/133 and 55/134, of 8 December 2000.